(108) (8 S.M) (1918)

Charleton

Sunday

My Billy.

I endose a note to Nelly to apologise for not coming yesterday, also to explain matters, as I cant remember her sur. name. I never thought they'd go on such a day. I hope they weren't drenched.

If Nelly had only come in here on some pretext I could no doubt have managed to see her alone.

I have said nothing about asking Liz to the music. as of course if I can get me. without 2 children of

would be much better.
The house certainly
would be rather uncomfortably
crowded with so many.
I can always write to
her later & suggest it if
I find it impossible to
get anyone else.

Please tell Leonard
I shall be very glad if
he will come to tea any
afternoon that he likes.
I shall be in every day.

Thank you very much
for arranging with N. & H.
I expect 15/- is a fair
price nowadays - I think
it was the old price for a
really good temporary
cook. & it is only for
3 weeks. About

Clive & Mary - if Mary
brings the children back as
I have asked her to on the
16th (as Mrs B. wants them
to London then for a night)
it seems to me it might
be rather difficult for them
to come to you then. as
I don't see how they'd get
J. & Q. here. So if it's
also difficult for you to
have them it's really
perfectly easy for them
to come here. It occurs
to me I suppose you
wouldn't come here for
the last week end of
theirs, May - the 21st-23rd
instead? If they coming
to you? I think it's very
likely I shall go to Rogers
on the 23rd for a week &

then in London for another week so I might not see you again. I hope I shall through some day this week, but I shouldn't after that unless you could come while the birds are here.

However, arrange what you like. Grading is such a long & difficult process, I expect it will take several visits to make even a beginning at it. & of course unless I'm quick there'll be a new rival in the field

Yours ever

T. PARSONS 3.2.73

46 Gordon Sq.

(109)

Friday

(24 Oct) (1918)

~~KINGS COLLEGE,~~

~~CAMBRIDGE.~~

My Billy.

How are you & what is happening to you? It seems a very long time since I heard anything. I have been having rather a tiresome time. I went to Roger's after all & cap there & suddenly seemed as high (weeping) to have a miscarriage (I'm all right now. but it was rather a pitiable) It would have been such a shame to lose the baby at this stage. However I went to bed at once & saw the doctor there who said very soon & nothing more happened - he said I must be very careful for 6 weeks or 10. So I have come here & am keeping quiet & mean to take every precaution.

Now about domestic affairs - as usual. You curse me when you read this I fear. However - when I was with Roger who should turn up but Nelly & Lottie. They didn't expect to see me & had apparently come to consult R. about their plans. Of course they burst out with all their accounts of the row. & had a long talk. They said they had offered to go back to you for a month & seemed to think they would really (ear then - or if not then before very long. But of course they may not, once they get back to you. I don't know what you think or want. Perhaps you have decided to let them go. In any case I don't want to ask them. Things in

any way she as he said that
left you they would come to me rather
than to any other new place, I asked them
if they did care to let me know before
taking any thing else. ... I want sure from
how Emily's sister would do, nor whether
I would anyhow rather, have them
in spite of all drawbacks, if they were
free. rather than E & her sister.

However today I have had letters from
Mrs Brereton & from Emily which show
me that it will probably be impossible for
me to keep E. long in any case. I can
tell her of course what has really happened.
I gather that Mrs Hammond asked Mrs B
to look up groceries. & this of course led to
words - I suppose E. may stay on at any
rate for a time if I want her to. but I
expect that she's not really suitable. I
don't suspect her of dishonesty but I think
she's too careless & rough. Mrs B. also thinks
she's going to have a baby! I doubt this
myself - her figure has always been
peculiar - but still I see she will be
very busy. & that will mean of course that
her sister won't stay either. So if
2 .. N. are really leaving you I should
be very glad if they came to me - If
they aren't I must try to find some else
that's a great hurry they could of course

(109ii)

KINGS COLLEGE,
~~CAMBRIDGE.~~

May write you as long as you wanted them. Thus I should be glad to get settled before the baby arrives. Also I should be glad to know soon if they are definitely not going up so that I can look out for others.

I don't want them to think that I am trying to get rid of them behind their backs, so I am writing also to Nelly to say that I have written to you. I shall be here all next week I think as Duncan has got some extra holiday so perhaps you could come & see me? I don't suppose I shall do out much.

I can't paint the room as I had meant to but I shall lie here & criticize his doing of it. Please let me if you could come some time - any day but Tuesday when Gertler is coming to tea.

What an awful nuisance all these things are. If it weren't for the baby it wouldn't matter, as it is I feel rather handicapped.

Love V B.

(Vera painting here)

Perhaps you could bring some watercolours

(110)

7 October 1918

46 Gordon Sq.

~~KINGS COLLEGE,~~

~~CAMBRIDGE.~~

Monday

My Baby.

Do come on Wednesday. Come early if you can as Norton is apt to come in about 6 & it's difficult to avoid him. We can discuss the whole servant question when I see you. You know I think it very important for you to have good servants too & I really don't want to upset yours. Only they seemed to think themselves so unlikely to stay with you much longer that the only question was whether when they did leave, they'd come to me: But knowing them, I didn't take it as seriously as I should have done from others. I

expect that (unless she's expecting) I can get Emily to be all right. I'm sure Mrs B. has been tactless

Meanwhile I suppose as you say you'll have endless talks with your two. I think you're right. It's really Lottie who feels she can't stay but Nelly evidently won't leave her.

I am all right now & am being most careful. Hardly doing anything & I mean to do nothing for the rest of the time. (Ice fold the rabbits-) It would even be a 7 months child, your paragon, so even Hugo would not criticise it. But I mean it to be a good 9 months baby if not 10 as mine usually seem to be.

I have an incredibly gloomy letter from Barbara too. Her mother is with her & never leaves her & Sadan is in greater pain than ever & can think of nothing but his health - altogether she is in the depths. I expect I shall see her this evening. Yours V B

(111)

Charleston

?24 Oct 1918

Thursday

My Billy

I'm glad you have thought once again of your poor sister pining for news in the country. You with all these wonderful interviews going on in your town mansion really ought to keep me posted up. I am fascinated by your accounts of Herbert Fisher, Ka & Saxon. Are you really right about Saxon? I've just had a most melancholy letter from him - Perhaps he enjoyed writing it. But if ones to believe him he sat so desperate at one point that he doubted whether he'd better not break altogether with Barbara - I suppose he won't but certainly, unless he does prefer Mrs Stapf as you think,

the outlook seems rather forlorn. I feel able to say nothing in reply but "I told you so". Can't you find someone else for him? Our attempt with Annie Violet has failed & now I think you ought to try someone else. Harry is the only person who leaps to my mind & I see she wouldn't do.

Do tell us more about Ka- Every detail is greedily snapped up.

I came back here to find that Emily was not going to have a baby - that was evidently a complete invention of Mrs B's. She shows no wish to & all is calm. Her sister has come. a rather sharp looking person of 19. Quiet nice I think & capable. & so far apparently a much better cook than Minnie. She

does what she's told which is a blessing. Cooking has been reduced to the simplest limits partly by want of materials & partly by want of coal. We're living on coke & wood. There's no coal at all to be got. I don't know what it's like in Richmond but here no one can get their rations, nor can they in Guildford. Luckily we have lots of wood but that's no good for cooking. I am enjoying more domestic peace however than I have ever had here before. E & her sister keep the house clean & each other company. There is no need for any conversation as there was with Trixie. In fact servants - real slaves - have returned. & there's much to be said for it. I give my orders like

a lady & see very little more of the Kitchen world for the rest of the day. I only hope it will last. With peace in prospect as we can't help hoping I daresay I shall now get on as long as is necessary at any rate - & then - perhaps domestic life can be thrown overboard.

I have nearly done the woodcut but it's rather difficult I find to do all the cutting. I may have left Roger, who's coming here I believe in a few days to help to finish it. The bother is that one has to use a certain amount of force & stoop over the block a good deal to cut at all deeply & I rather doubt if I shall be able to do many more till after the baby is born. But I'm going to see if I can

(111 ii)
arrange some kind of desk
which would make it possible.

Do you know that
Gertler's visit to you has
nearly had disastrous results
for me & in fact all of us?
It has upset Mary a good
deal? He really is most
unsafe. Apparently you
talked about Mary to him.
I don't know what was
said. But as far as I am
concerned the only thing that
mattered was that you
seem to have told him that
I found Mary a great bore
& was generally rather
critical & abusive of her.
Of course this isn't true.
As a matter of fact I
like Mary very much &
I think the only criticism
I ever make of her is that
she's too silent. But in any

case whatever you may have said to Sertes was at once repeated by him either directly to Mary or to Jack or Monty Shearman - I'm not quite sure which - who handed it on to her. You see the situation is that Jack, Monty, Sertes & all the circle she used to be very much at the head of are very jealous, not only of Clive but of all of us. They resent her preferring us to them & their method is to tell her all they can to persuade her that we don't really like her & that she's not nearly such a success with us as she thinks.

It's naturally very hard for her not to believe it when they come with these stories of what we have said about her & of course she gets very much upset about it all.

It increases her silence & want of self confidence with us & is altogether a great pity.

Do be careful what you say to Scottie: & please don't let him or in fact anyone think that I don't like Mary. For as you know I do. & it will make things very awkward if she gets it into her head that I don't.

As for Scottie, he isn't malicious I think, but simply so dense that he doesn't see in the least what his remarks will lead to but blurts out anything that comes into his head. & so as I told you before it is most dangerous to talk freely to him. Its especially so where Mary is concerned as he goes at once to Monty Sheaman

who tells everything to Jack whose one object is to make mischief between Mary & all of us. In this case she was made so unhappy that it all came out to Clive & so to me - in fact I saw myself that something was the matter & I hope like made things all right - But its always happening in small ways.

Mrs Grant is coming for the week end & so is Maynard. & Roger next week

Yours VB

(112)

Charleston 2 Nov. 1918

Sat.

My Billy.

I'm sorry I seem to have raised such a turmoil - & I may have been wrong in thinking it was entirely your talk with Lytton which was the cause of the whole thing. I daresay he repeated some things you had said & some things other people had. As usual of course one can never really find out about these second hand conversations. I only wanted you to be on your guard with him because he has no instinct whatever about discretion. In this particular case too I thought you probably didn't understand the situation as I didn't know so much

about it myself the the
other day. I don't think
it really so absurd of
Mary to mind hearing
that these things have been
said. As you know your-
self one does mind hearing
that things have been said
about one & it must
be much worse when they're
deliberately repeated with
intent to make mischief
as they seem to be to her.
As far as I can. Father
Jack & Co are incredibly
jealous & unscrupulous &
do all they can to under-
mine her self confidence
with all of us & tell her all
they can rake up against
us & against herself.
The only disaster would be
that she'd be made so
unhappy by it all - has
been, in fact. It's time she

can come. I ask one about it but its not really always easy to. Things are insinuated that its not easy to investigate & that one can't help affecting one - I thought you might simply have said the sort of thing to settle that grieve said to me - about her being affected & self conscious & too much aware of her clothes & to be able to talk, etc. without realizing that it would all reach her partially in a worse form - As far as I'm concerned it would only matter if the impression were given that I said these things or agreed with them. However I expect its all right now

I think Mary was a
good deal upset but I
don't know exactly what
was said to her & I think
shes probably recovered

I am sending you
my word ~~xxxx~~ Rock. Do
you think I could have
a proof of it? I have
only been able to take
rough prints & I expect
its sure to want some
more doing to it but I can't
tell till I see how you
print it. Do you also
want a small block?
If so I could do me quite
quickly. Roger is
here, also Pamela. who
has been driven from school
by influenza. Oh Ezekiel
She fills me with loathing!
Duncan is absolutely fascinated
& reads her aloud to me.
suppose I must send her back
but I can't part with her yet.
Do write soon. I see you have a
great deal more really to tell me

3.2.73
T. PARSONS